

Diet in Body Maintenance and Curing

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Because food created fire, the daily diet could be a source of illness or a therapeutic means. Every food had known properties for heating or cooling, and for other effects as well. Guava fruit, alcohol, and turtle or cobra curry were heating. Eggs were cooling. Depending on the occasion, ice and iced concoctions were over-heating or over-cooling. They were always "dangerous during menstruation." Banana varied according to the variety: khua hōm (fragrant banana) was undesirably cooling and caused either diarrhea or constipation (Hauk, 1959:27); khua nam wā was less deleterious (salamān) while khua nam was good for the sick or for parturients (Boonlong).

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Properties in food changed in cooking. Boiling made rice "ripe" (huk) and so available as nourishment (Anuman Rajadon:77). Even the method of cooking varied the properties. For the sick and for parturients, the banana variety called khua hak huk was good if baked, but not if cooked in syrup (Boonlong).

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Some foods were "incompatible" with, and so aggravated, certain illnesses. Air-borne food in the form of smell was incompatible with, and compounded, a condition of wind excess. Death or blindness ensued. On the other hand, asafetida might be tied to the wrist of a new-born baby so that the smell, an established carminative, might cure the excess wind in his stomach manifested as flatulence.

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Beneficial foods were encouraged. Of all these none surpassed rice, the main sustenance of the body, "the only true food" (Yong Chutima, in Hauk, 1959:27) and source of "strength" to the farmer. Rice was a safe food. It never disturbed elements. Eating rice, as compared with meat, had no overtone of taking life. One could eat one's fill without any sin. Most of all, rice nourished the human khwan, for each grain contained a part of the khwan of the divine Rice Mother. Furthermore, any food offered ritually to a spirit or to make merit acquired strengthening properties, and was afterwards given to priests, children, or to the sick.

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Food with known dangers were avoided. "khua tīnī banana, a variety full of seeds, was never eaten because it contained a female ghost (phī)."¹ Jackfruit was avoided by lactating women as a direct source of wind-excess. Fruit in general was not dangerous but "did not give enough strength for a rice farmer. It was all right for an orchardist."

People used their knowledge of food properties to ameliorate their physical condition. During lactation, for instance, women ate vegetables or not "depending on the condition of the baby," for breast milk was very easily affected by adverse properties. In the broader context of general dietary needs, people entertained ideas about the suitability of certain foods to certain ages, sexes, occupations, conditions, and occasions (Hauk, et al: 42-50). Nevertheless, persons often risked an undesirable effect in food for pleasure. The proper banana variety for ritual use was the tiny khua nam, yet it was not planted much in Bang Chan because the people "did not like the taste." They substituted the "pleasant-tasting" khua nam wa. Here orthodoxy came off second. The heat of alcoholic drink relished by men and older women often pressed the margin of safe temperature control. The cobra--turtle--or chicken--plus--alcohol feasts exemplified how readily the elders gambled even on the increment of sin from eating meat, or risked an over-heated temper, for the joy of eating such cherished delicacies.

Food dislikes, if temporary, reflected an imbalance of elements; if usual, an individual constitutional set of the person's elements. To eat disliked food was therefore positively harmful. To urge someone to eat disliked food was wrong.

Illness

All illness, anxiety, and soul loss was caused by intrusions from outside the body. The intrusion might be from a supernatural source (wisat: powerful) or natural (tam thammachit) (Textor:10) but in either case the result was the same: disruption of the elements. Anxiety, whether caused by a social situation such as fear of frustration, by a broken bone or by a fever, also was a disruption of balance. An attack by the supernatural disease missile, "khun"¹⁷ gave rise to the classic symptoms of wind-excess: "a man cried all the time and had flatulency." Elements were also disorganized by spirit attack. The victim suffered hysteria, paroxysm, flatulence, convulsion,

16. Phillips (p. 45) reported that parents did not give their child a disliked medicine because "it offends him.... It is better not to give it to him than hurt his feelings."

17. This small skin missile invaded the body and then expanded to the size of a buffalo. Intentional attack (sorcery) might kill; accidental, merely pained (cf. Textor:116-127). Suspected khun was one of the few reasons why a family would authorize so grave a violation of the body of a deceased member as an autopsy.

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to be reborn as men. All women were eager to undergo the post-partum fire at least once. After that modifications might be entertained.⁵⁷ Whether the baby lived or died was not pertinent, for the benefits of the fire were for the mother.

Comparison of Male and Female Maturation Rites

The parallel ritual that fitted men to perform their masculine role was ordination into the Buddhist priesthood. The well-documented Buddhist ends should not be permitted to eclipse this other personal goal. Just as the fire prepared a woman for motherhood, so ordination changed an immature youth into a man ready for marriage and fatherhood. He too was transformed from raw (*sin*) to ripe (*auk*). Men gained compassion through denial and suffering. Since their natures were seen as hard (*ahang*), strong, bent on gain, influence, and power, possibly destructive and concupiscent, the severest deprivations were invoked: the renouncement of the gratifications of sex and food. Of the 2, the deprivation of food involved the greatest break with previous habits, for since babyhood, food had been a symbol of maternal care. Hence, a man was cast on his own. His only refuge and support was the Buddha, the law, and the Brotherhood. This self-denial induced the suffering that, coupled with knowledge gained from study of the scriptures, led to compassion. The suffering in no way

57. The fire-rite though desirable was not obligatory. In 1865, Bradley said it could be "dispensed with in times of civil commotion, for fear of the enemy" and "no damages whatever were suffered whatever to mother or child" (p.79). Like other life cycle rites it was postponed if not convenient (*saduak*). Also in times of peace, "a few mothers here and there cannot lie by the fire," and a few say, "they will not" (ibid:p.79). Bang Chan would accept this viewpoint freely as reflecting an individual, constitutional set of elements, or as an autonomous decision of an individual. The woman would never feel herself as competent as a ritually mature person though.

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844 this rust is believed to cause tetanus--and they are unsuit-
 178 able for the ritual objective at the moment of cutting. It
 179 will be remembered that cutting the cord on a rhizome of
 412 phlai or soil with a bamboo sliver from the housepost guar-
 antees that a child will not roam away from home. Could the
 bamboo sliver be dipped in "heating" alcohol, or passed over
 the flame of a holy fire? Could the old family kitchen-
 knife--long associated with the household--be substituted
 and dipped in the beneficial heat of boiling water? Such a
 knife once was substituted on the winnowing tray. Might the
phlai or soil be covered with a boiled, clean, old cloth?
 If modern science succeeds in coming up with an acceptable
 substitute, one sees the possibility of a very small change
 making a big difference in the amount of tetanus poisoning
 observed (Hauck, 1956:41). One should then ask the midwives
 to watch as to whether the new method reduced the infection
 called "death because of a red or green face and clenched
 fists."

262 In diet "the concept that a good choice of food is
 important to the health of both mother and child" (Hauck,
 1959:2) was very much shared by modern science and by tradi-
 tional ideas but the basis of choice was entirely differ-
 ent.⁷⁷ Modern science has ascertained that certain foods are
 • [261] beneficial because of certain nutrients, while old beliefs
 have set up certain foods as desirable because of proper-
 ties of heating, cooling, compatibilities with the elements,
 etc. The nature of these properties should be collected and
 listed. If dietary deficiencies in Bang Chan are noted, the
 foods that combine the needed beneficial qualities in both
 systems should be stressed. A hot-tasting tonic (ยา) with
 appropriate dietary supplements, to be taken daily during
 pregnancy, and another kind during the post-partum period,
 might be acceptable. The period of the fire-rest is the best
 372 place to initiate dietary changes for whatever is done by
 846 the fire becomes a habit beneficial to mother and child. The
 use of boiled water should be encouraged as "making for
 health." Again, disturbance of customs is minimized,
 and the presence or absence of "increased strength" and
 healthiness can be observed experientially.

77. Hauck felt the concept was lacking, but it appears only
 that the grounds of choice were different.

992 village offers of regular service, the holiday offerings, home
262 invitations and sporadic gifts so that all priests had places
411 to go, no one had much more than any other, and that the whole
temple did not undergo periods of undue glut or hardship.

992 About mid-July, Buddhist Lent changed the food habits
994 somewhat. This three-month period corresponded with the height
262 of the rainy season. Priests did not leave the temple to
gather offerings on rainy mornings, but younger priests, assisted
by the temple boys, cooked meals from supplies on hand.
On the first day of Lent, people brought less perishable foods:
green bananas, coconuts, sugar cane, pomelo, sweet potatoes,
taro, onions, garlic, salt, sugar, dry salted beef paste, dried
fish, canned goods, and milled rice. During Lent fresh or
cooked foods were brought in, and some ladies volunteered to
cook for varying periods of time. On a holiday in September,
families made up such quantities of a sweet of "puffed" glutin-
ous rice, sesame seed, and peanuts pounded and held together
with sirup and sometimes covered with grated coconut that
priests were tired of it and many children got diarrhea from
overeating of it.

In mid-October, the Lenten restrictions ended with an-
other holiday offering, and thereafter the priests went regu-
larly on their appointed rounds.

794 On Buddhist holidays, the people did not usually eat any
261 of the food brought to the temple, but on (3)thausud (2)ka-
(5)thin², an all-day festival held in October or November,
after feeding the priests, the people also ate bounteously.

792 Building at Wat Bang Chan in 1954 were 22 boys, aged 10
857 to 16, sent to serve the priests, get their living and attend
262 school. Most of them were from poor or disorganized homes.
They shared the food offerings from which they received three
meals a day. Among the children's food records, the food
listed by these boys as eaten the day before was comparatively
diverse.

792 1. Amounts of food given usually exceeded the actual
262 needs of the priests and temple boys. One instance was noted
737 in which food was sent by the priests to a needy old person
235 nearby. Leftover rice was dried and sold for chicken feed.

114 2. The transcription used throughout this report is
104 that described by Cha et al., 1953, pp. 12-15. Numbers in
parentheses represent the different tones of the syllables.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FAMILY FARE IN BANG CHAN

261 As we turn to a detailed description of the family fare,
101 we should like to point out that starvation was unknown in
Bang Chan. Although much room remains for improvement in
731 diet, "hollow hunger" was uncommon. In the few times when
disastrous flood destroyed the year's crop, the government
was able to provide enough rice so that it need not be ra-
193 tioned. People still ate their fill. Even floods had their
226 advantage: one could fish out the window. That gross caloric
undernutrition was rare was borne out by examination of the
146 school children (Hauck, 1956). "On the average . . . Bang
145 Chan children could not be considered as markedly under-
weight. Few were so thin that one could 'count their ribs'
and still fewer would be considered plump by American
141 standards." In a random sample of village households that
included about 10% of the population, the heaviest man
weighed 69 kg. (151.8 pounds) and the heaviest woman 70 kg.
(154 pounds). We noted no more than half a dozen adults who
appeared to be "overweight." Most were middle aged or older,
and none of them did strenuous field work.

Sources of Food

Home Production, Storage and Preservation

262 Rice. - Rice is an essential part of any Thai meal.
The majority of the rice farmers in Bang Chan had rice for
home consumption milled for them at Minburi. In general,
251 they took their own paddy to the mill, and brought the re-
sulting milled rice home, where it was stored in a box or
mat-bin. Although, according to a recent survey (Goldsen and
Ralis, 1957) nearly a third of the households owned a home
rice mill, undermilled or home-pounded rice was not widely
126 used in Bang Chan. Information on this point was obtained
for 333 of 336 "kitchen-unit" households in the village. Of
these 5 consumed home-milled rice only, 51 used home-milled
rice in major part, 73 in minor part, and 199 not at all.

221 In households where home-milled rice was used, during
256 June enough would be pounded to last until harvest, at which
time hands were sore and bleeding from the field work and
home pounding was impossible. At the time when data for the
505 present report were being gathered, most families took paddy
256 to the mill when water in the canal was high enough so that
it could be transported by boat. If a farmer on a subsidiary

1293 1. In some large houses, two related family groups
lived together but maintained separate kitchens.

252 a woman's" (Sharp et al., 1953, p. 88). For instance, the
462 husband cooked when his wife was away from home, e.g. selling
252 in the market or in farm labor, and of course when she was
867 sick or resting after childbirth. The ability of boys as well
as girls to cook rice and some of the accompaniments was taken
for granted. A girl or boy could cook rice "as soon as he
could lift the rice pot," e.g. at 6 or so; by age 12 he could
cook a creditable meal. In mid-December, 1952, on the last
day of school before vacation, one of us saw committees of
school children (aged 7-14 years) preparing food for a special
meal, on the school grounds. The variety of dishes prepared
and the ease with which the children went about their tasks
gave evidence of the home experience these children had had
(Hauck, 1953). Responsibility for food preparation increased
252 with age up to about 15 years, after which all available able-
867 bodied family members did field work during the busy seasons
(cf. p. 11). Several hours per day were spent in cooking and
by middle age, parents were eager to turn this job over to a
daughter or daughter-in-law. If they had no daughter, this
was an explicit reason for adopting a baby girl.

252 Certain men of eminence, e.g. headmen and elders, would
554 not be asked to cook at all, but as they aged, they might re-
867 turn to the task. One old headman, all of whose children had
married and left home, said that he was doing the cooking for
2 months because his wife had back trouble. Some dishes were
252 cooked by men only, even when their wives stood by: turtle,
562 frog and cobra curries, for instance. These were also food
for men only, suitable to serve at a drinking party.

252 A premium was put on good cooking, and certain women
261 who were noted for their cooking were in great demand for large
867 scale food preparation during the ceremonial season. One far-
mer planned to send his daughter to learn from such a skilled
cook, having in mind the food preparation which would be
needed when his sons were old enough to be ordained. Adverse
comments might be made if the food did not come up to expecta-
tion; thus, a small boy complained that his curry was "too
salty," and an old woman said loudly that the curry made by
her 16-year old grand-daughter was "not good," although this
girl was the only one at home to cook.

Meal Patterns¹ and Preparation of Typical Thai Dishes

252 Food was commonly prepared twice a day, in the morning
264 and late afternoon. The meal pattern was the same for breakfast

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262 1. Suvarnakich (1950) described the Thai diet in a
general way and Sharp et al., (1953, pp. 263-274) summarized
the small amount of information on diet in Bang Chan obtained
during the preliminary study in 1948-49.

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The observer often had opportunity to make notes on foods eaten by various family members. Two examples of these are included in Appendix A, p. 97.

Snacks

We have noted that various family members ate the morning meal, in particular, at different times, and that children especially might eat leftover food between meals. Most Bang Chan school children¹ ate snacks, which were usually different from foods eaten at a regular meal. Doubtless most of them were purchased from one of the vendors who were to be seen on the school grounds daily. Fruits and "desserts" were most commonly eaten, although a variety of other foods, not a part of the usual Thai meal, were also listed. Sweets were listed about 450 times on the 539 records obtained. Many of them had a base of rice, rice flour or glutinous rice with sugar, and included coconut, banana or other fruit. Some were made with legumes, and a few contained egg. Fried bananas, fried sweet potato slices, bananas or beans cooked in syrup, and bananas cooked in sweetened coconut milk were also listed. A few items such as ices, flavored syrup poured over shaved ice, and candies, had little nutrient value other than caloric content.

A glass of milk, and milk with coffee, were each listed once. These might have been obtained at the store adjoining the school grounds. These instances are worth noting primarily because, although dried and tinned milks were obtainable, milk was seldom given to village children after weaning.

Many children were given a bit of cash each day, and Janlekha (1955) commented that some children who did not have any might barter an egg for snacks. One could tell fairly well from the children's records what the vendors offered for sale on a given day. Some influence of season was apparent; thus ices and syrup over shaved ice were eaten more often during the hot dry season, and cooked foods such as fried Chinese noodles appeared primarily in the cool season.

1. With the cooperation of teachers of the third and fourth grades in the Bang Chan elementary school, records of food eaten during 24-hour periods were obtained from children in these grades at intervals of about one month during the school year. This was a regular activity in the health class. A total of 539 records (from 1 to 8 for each child) were obtained from 75 boys and 72 girls. To facilitate recording, each child was given a sheet of paper, with spaces for his name, the date, and kinds of food other than rice, eaten at the morning, noon and evening meals, and as snacks. These records were collected primarily for information on meal patterns of village families for comparison with the limited sample in the dietary survey, and on seasonal use of various foods.

Attitudes Toward Food

262 To older Bang Chan residents, to lack rice was to starve
• 263 even though fish or vegetable fare were at hand. Since rice
264 was the staff of life, many important customs clustered about
265 it. Ceremonies to the Rice Goddess accompanied the raising,
266 sowing, and storing of rice. When the unhusked rice was in
267 the bin, it could not be withdrawn at any time as needed, but
268 astrological charts had to be consulted to make sure the day
269 was auspicious. Paddy could never be withdrawn on Friday, a
270 day sacred to the Rice Goddess. After cooking, the best rice
271 was said to be at the mouth of the pot, so this was offered
272 on ceremonial occasions. Important rules were that when cook-
273 ing rice, the cover of the pot must never be laid in a mortar
274 and it must be inverted, never laid down flat; otherwise one
275 would be short of rice. One must never scrape the top of the
276 rice with the cover, or the "soul" of the rice would be scraped
277 out of the pot. Moslem residents murmured an Arabic prayer
278 every time the rice was put into the pot, and every time the
279 pot was put onto the fire, as well as before eating.

280 Rice has been generally regarded as the strength-giving
281 food par excellence. A portion of Chutima's (1939) descrip-
282 tion of the "old system" follows:

Our children and young women are forbidden by
ancient doctrine from eating any fair quantity
of animal products, but must eat plenty of rice
which is considered as the only true food, the
others being only appetizers. And to stimulate
the palate, large quantities of hot and irritat-
ing condiments (chilies and peppers principally)
are consumed at every meal. Some vegetables,
boiled or raw, are also included, but in small
quantities in spite of abundant supply.

The quotation indicates first that in the past, rice was con-
sidered much more important as food than the "with-rice"
dishes. Since the Food and Drug Division of the Ministry of
Public Health has been attempting to encourage the eating of
more "with-rice," the attitudes found in Bang Chan are of
interest. One informant stated that only rice can make chil-
dren fat, and that the "hot taste" foods help them to eat
more rice. Another commented that rice makes children strong,
and "with-rice" makes them weak. Another, a mother of seven
children, said that if babies were given too much "with-rice"
they would be potbellied. The more modern view was expressed
by an informant who said that a certain child ate only rice
with fish, and was weak; he refused vegetables and banana.
One affluent farmer, an elderly man whose orphaned grandchild
was being raised on cow's milk (evaporated or dried milk,
diluted with boiled water) expressed the opinion that the
ancient belief was based on thrift. He said that thrifty

262 people did not want to spend much on a baby, therefore they
• 261 said that if a child ate too much "with-rice" he would be
potbellied but thin in the upper part of the body, and that
eating eggs would cause dental caries. This grandfather
said he believed the truth to be just the opposite, but that
goods things were expensive. As an illustration of the idea
that thrift was the basis of restriction of "with-rice,"
one young mother said that an egg was regarded as equivalent
to one (1)plaa (1)thuu (fish), and was enough for two per-
sons. Sometimes one egg would serve an entire family. She
said that a child would be punished if he ate a whole egg
at a meal.

262 Secondly, Chutima suggests that particular foods were
associated with, or suitable for, particular age levels, and
a given sex. Data obtained in Bang Chan indicate that cer-
tain foods were associated with conditions such as pregnancy,
lactation, and the puerperium, with occupation, and even
653 socio-economic levels. For infants, breast milk was con-
sidered most suitable. The newborn infant was not usually
put to the mother's breast for about 3 days after birth, and
if a relative or neighbor did not nurse the infant, the small
banana called (3)klua (4)nam-(4)waa (see p. 46), raw or
baked, was crushed and fed to him before his mother's milk
was available. This banana and rice, as (3)khaaw (3)tom and
(3)khaaw (2)ping (two watery preparations), sometimes crushed
with (3)klua (4)nam-(4)waa, were always the first solid foods
introduced while the infant was breast fed. No other foods
were introduced early. Some infants received fish and egg by
6 months of age, and a majority ate these foods by the time
they were a year old. Some two year olds had not yet been
given vegetables, and very few infants ate them before they
were one year old.

855 Giving of "holy food"¹ to children suggests concern for
[776] strengthening children through dietary as well as other ritual
means.

262 At the other end of life, as old age approached, the
858 diet was supposed to change, ideally to a completely vege-
tarian one. Since one was soon to face death, one gave up
eating meat and even fish, if possible, so as to avoid taking
life. It was considered pitiful or wrong for an old person
to fish. Being able to go without food was associated with
merit. Those who stayed overnight at the temple on the Budd-
hist holy day went without solid food from before noon until
the next morning as the priests did. One elderly woman re-
marked that when she stayed overnight at the temple she did
not feel hungry, and did not eat anything at night, but other
women, feeling hungry, drank coffee or milk at night. She

1. See p. 50.

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262 understood that her merit helped her not to be hungry. Once
899 she asked an eminent layman about eating at night. He said,
"If you are not hungry, do not eat. If you feel hungry, it
is better to eat. If someone invites you to eat, it is sin-
ful to refuse."

- 261 Even young adults had a strong revulsion against glut-
tony. One of the symptoms of a man who went mad and had to be
committed to an institution was that "he ate too much." A
woman was despised because "she ate in secret. She stole eggs
from her husband, sold them in the market, and then spent the
cash on food which she ate there, instead of bringing it home."
Definitions of a glutton were, "A 'with-rice' eater," or simply
as "one who eats alone." These comments highlight the counsels
of eating in moderation and in company. On the other hand, a
full stomach was valued for "home is where one eats one's fill."

262 At maturity, when farm and other tasks were shared as
52 equals, men and women ate almost the same food. The old pros-
cription against animal food for women was somewhat relaxed,
262 but not entirely. To sustain farmers during the seasons of
228 hard work, however, extra quantities of rice and rice alone,
were considered essential. "With-rice" was pleasant but not so
necessary. Any shift away from a diet of rice as ordinarily
cooked in Bang Chan- was construed as a shift either in occu-
pation or in health. For example an eminent citizen who gave
199 up farming took to eating (3)khaaw (3)tom often. This soupy
rice, a staple dish for infant feeding, had interesting socio-
economic connotations. It was served as a light lunch to
cooperative farm-workers to be followed at the day's end by a
real meal. It was also "delicate" food, suitable for the sick,
for city-people, for those who did not toil with their hands
and backs. Consequently, when this man ate this "delicate
food" more often, he was consciously or unconsciously serving
notice on the community that he was not going to do farm work
any more, for (3)khaaw (3)tom could not possibly have sus-
tained a farmer's strength. Caustic villagers hinted that he
was putting on airs.

262 Among conditions in which some change from the usual
343 diet was found were pregnancy, post parturition and lactation.
346 Relatively few foods were generally considered to be tabooed
under any of these conditions, but many women preferred to
limit intake to "safe" foods if there were any possibility that
certain foods might cause harm.

[26] Information was obtained from 42 mothers about the food
they ate during the post-partum rest period. Two said they
ate as usual, but for the remainder, the diet was considerably

[192] 1. Literally "beautiful rice." For method of cooking,
see p. 33.

443 she wanted to spend more time collecting debts."

221 It should be noted that A's brief duration of peddl-
433 ing started in the harvesting season. During this time the
434 village cash supply was high, resulting in demand for such
443 a delicacy as pork which normally constituted a negligible
• 261 fraction of the diet of Bangchan people. This is a good
262 business period for the peddlers. Another good business
period, although not as good as the harvesting time, is in
the transplanting season, when farmers are too busy to pro-
cure their own food (by fishing). In this latter period,
farmers are not particular about food, and "anything eatable
sells, provided liberal credit is allowed" for people have
neither time nor money.

443 It should be noted also that many smaller peddlers
did not go to Bangkok as did Mang A. The small peddlers,
who operated on a very limited working capital, had to sell
their eggs to larger peddlers at discounted prices. Our
records show that only three or four peddlers took regular
trips to Bangkok.

427 Five families were classified as investors in 1953.
434 All these families lived on rents from land, interest on
454 loans, and income from speculative sources such as buying
621 paddy when the price was low and selling it at high prices.
463 Actually, most of these five families were not among large
426 land owners in the village. Their combined land was only
134 rai, averaging only 27 rai per family and ranging from
10 to 76 rai. This is a small acreage in comparison to

262 family sit at the table while "with-rice" are placed at
264 the center and each person must partake of a small bit of
these, just enough to properly go with a spoonful of rice
taken each time. This table etiquette is generally observed
throughout the country by all classes of people. A story
had it that a Thai student of an aristocrat family wrote
home objecting to the proposed marriage between his sister
and one of his Thai friends in America. One count against
the man was that he had been observed to have taken too
much "with-rice" while dining out at a Chinese restaurant
in New York!

511 Among the factors affecting variability of the rate
182 of consumption of various items of goods, the following
may be mentioned:

- 261 a. Relative price of the food in relation to its
511 ability to mollify hunger when taken with rice. When Bangchan
182 farmers were questioned why they did not consume eggs pro-
duced at home but instead sold them and bought the inferior
platoo fish (Rastrelliger chrysourus), the answer was that
an egg barely induced them to take a plate of rice whereas
one platoo fish bought with half the money obtained from
the sale of an egg could induce them to take three or four
plates of rice and thus satisfying a hearty meal.

511 b. Homogeneity of quantitative need for certain
182 products like rice, fish, clothing, tobacco, and garlic.
Consumption per consuming unit of these goods has been
observed to be more or less constant regardless of the
prices and the family's purchasing power.

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c. The family's purchasing power. Certain goods considered as luxuries -- medicine, eggs, pork and beef, and white sugar -- were not consumed by poor families.

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d. Individual taste and preference. The Moslems would not consume any pork although they had enough money to buy it. Some poor farmers spent more money on curry essence than their more affluent neighbors because they preferred highly flavored dishes, and some tobacco smokers did not spend a cent on tobacco binder because they preferred the home-grown banana leaf binder to the thatch leaf binder which had to be purchased.

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e. Producing ability of the family. It was observed that those who caught more fish tended to consume more fish regardless of their financial conditions.

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f. Health affected the consumption of medicine.
g. Prestige affected the amount of cash contributions to neighbors.

h. Personal habits -- thrift, fun loving, indulgence, like or dislike of liquor -- affected the amount of personal expense.

i. Presence or absence of children of school age in the family affected the consumption of cookies.

Special Expenses

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By special expenses we mean major items of expenses which do not occur regularly but which may arise in one time or another. Examples: purchases of land, gold and